

# Heart smart nutrition



The research is overwhelming that making small dietary changes can get your “numbers” (namely cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood pressure) moving in the right direction. Use the tips below to help you on your way to heart health.

## The skinny on fat

The American Heart Association recommends that we limit foods that are high in saturated fat, trans fats and cholesterol, including meat, full-fat dairy products, foods containing hydrogenated vegetable oils, and egg yolks. Trans fats are not always included in food labels, so look for the words “hydrogenated” in the ingredient list.

### Use monounsaturated fats

Use as a substitute for saturated and trans fats. Sources include olive oil, canola oil, seeds, avocados, and nuts.

### Use polyunsaturated fats

Use in place of saturated and trans fats. Sources include vegetable oils, fish oils, corn oils, and safflower oils.

Note: All fats, whether heart-healthy or not, have 9 calories per gram, twice that of carbohydrates and proteins—so use a light hand.

## Packing in the produce

Eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. As a general rule, add a fruit or veggie to each meal by:

- Having bananas, blueberries or grapefruit with your breakfast
- Packing a piece of fruit with lunch each day
- Putting red grapes in the freezer for a refreshing snack
- Snacking on veggies with hummus or low-fat dip

## Sow your oats

The soluble fiber in oatmeal and oat bran can lower your risk of heart disease and can decrease your cholesterol. Start your day with a bowl of oatmeal!

## Fiber full

Add more whole grain and high-fiber foods to your diet. When selecting breads, cereals, and snacks, look for breads with two or more grams of fiber and cereal with five or more grams of fiber.

## Easy bean salad

- 1 can of your favorite beans (kidney, chickpeas, black, white, pinto), rinsed
- 3-4 ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 3/4 cup chopped parsley
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Toss together in a bowl and serve.

## Bean cuisine

Beans (legumes), such as kidney and pinto beans, are loaded with soluble fiber, which can lower blood cholesterol levels. Get started by adding legumes to soups and salads. Check out cookbooks for scrumptious bean-based main dishes.

## Something fishy

Fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel, and herring, are packed with omega-3 fatty acids that can reduce your risk of heart disease. Two servings of fatty fish per week may help reduce the risk of stroke.

*This information has been provided by the registered dietitians at it nutrition. ©2004 it nutrition, LLC. [www.itnutrition.com](http://www.itnutrition.com)*

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